STEADY MARCH TOWARD VICTORY

At a solemn meeting held on August 31, 1971 marking the 26th anniversary of the victorious August Revolution and the founding of the DRVN, Premier PHAM VAN DONG delivered an important speech on the situation in both zones of Viet Nam.

Following are excerpts from his speech dealing with our people's resistance to US aggression. The title is ours—Ed.

ON the front of the anti-US resistance for national salvation let us look back at the whole of our people's patriotic war, fully assess its origin and character, hence correctly understanding its process and development which will lead to its inevitable result. We often say that this war has its own logic and laws, that is the inevitable victory of our people. Such is the inevitable outcome of the war determined by its origin and character. For US imperialism, it is an aggressive war, a colonial war, the most atrocious aggressive and colonial war ever recorded in history. For the Vietnamese people, it is a great national liberation war, a great patriotic war in our epoch. This war has gone through many periods since the 1954 Geneva Conference on Indochina: the US imperialist intervention in South Viet Nam immediately following the conclusion of the 1954 Geneva Agreements, followed by the "special war" then the "local war" and now the "Vietnamization" of the war. This process and development is one of successive and ever heavier failures of the US imperialists and ever bigger victories of the Vietnamese people who have foiled one after another all the military and political plans of the enemy. This process will lead the Vietnamese people to their total victory which will sweep our country clean of the US aggressors, to the recovery and consolidation of the Vietnamese nation's independence and freedom.

Not until now, after more than ten years of war, but right from the outset we already were aware of this law of war and predicted its trend and tendency. This appraisal of our forces and those of the enemy bears a fundamental strategic significance: "Knowing the enemy and ourselves, we can win a hundred victories in a hundred battles." Proceeding from this correct view, our Party, right at the outset has determined our revolutionary line, our military and political line in war, the strategic and tactical problems and our related internal and external policies. There lies the origin of our people's strength and iron-like determination in waging a protracted, hard but bound-to-win resistance. To grasp firmly and know how to apply this law means to hold the initiative and today, as everyone can see, we have always held the initiative in the war, the initiative on the battlefields, in political struggle, in diplomatic activities, hence our victories. More than ever, we must firmly hold and develop this initiative to win still bigger victories and advance to complete victory: liberate the South, defend the socialist North, and achieve the peaceful reunification of our beloved Fatherland.

Above is the appraisal of ourselves and the enemy. That is not enough. The war of resistance of our people against US aggression for national salvation must be placed in the context of the present era, the era of advance from capitalism to socialism on a world scale, the era of the three revolutionary currents which are repulsing step by step and defeating part by part imperialism headed by US imperialism. Thus, the inevitable trend of the war between the Vietnamese people and the US imperialist aggressors must be placed in the context of the common trend of our era, a trend having the character of a law, the trend of historical evolution. Here too, we are also holding the initiative; we have applied this law through the clearsighted line on international and correct diplomatic policy of our Party and State. Thanks to this, we have won the sympathy, support and assistance—which are in fact the expression of the militant solidarity — of the peoples of the Soviet Union, China and the other socialist countries and of the other peoples in the world for our people's struggle of deep and broad international significance. This militant solidarity has led to the formation in practice of the world people's front in support of the resistance of the Vietnamese and Indochinese peoples against US aggression. Our thanks go to Marx and Lenin, to President Ho Chi Minh who have instilled into our people the purest and noblest sentiments of proletarian internationalism, who have taught us how to associate the revolutionary interests of our nation with the revolutionary interests of the other nations, of the world's peoples. Our thanks go to our brothers and friends in all continents who have brought us additional material strength and moral encouragement, who have helped us fully realize our duty of fighting to the end to win victory, which will be the victory of the Vietnamese people, of the peoples of the three Indochinese countries as well as of socialism, of the national liberation movement, of the world peace movement, of democracy and of the whole progressive mankind.

DURING their very complicated and arduous struggle against US aggression, our people have waged a fight on three fronts, military, political and diplomatic. Reality has eloquently demonstrated that only in this way could we mobilize all the forces that can be mobilized in the country and abroad and right in the United States, to foil step by step all brutal plans and manoeuvres and dark schemes of the enemy, expose their nature and their aggressive and bellicose features, isolate them to the highest degree, drive them to the wall and steadily march to victory.

Let us recall here the major landmarks of this struggle.

The last months of 1964 marked the irretrievable failure of the "special" war. The newly published secret documents of the Pentagon have thrown more light on the "near collapse" of the puppet administration in South Viet Nam. It was precisely in those days that we made public our four-point stand aimed at creating an opportunity to end the war and restore peace on the basis of the scrupulous implementation of the provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam. However, the Johnson administration at that time chose to escalate the war, climbing to the highest rung of the local war which was actually a very big war of the Unived States against both South and North Viet Nam. At that time, even people in Johnson's entourage warned him against such an adventurous gamble which they said might end in fiasco. As for us, we issued a serious warning to them: "Be careful! The higher you escalate, the heavier will be your fall." Naturally things have taken this course, and it could not be otherwise.

1968, especially the Spring of that year, saw great victories of our people's patriotic resistance against US aggression, victories that rocked the whole of the United States. After that we took a series of diplomatic moves aimed at ending the war of aggression of the US, and seeking a correct settlement of the Viet Nam issue on the basis of the US recognition of the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people. However, President Richard Nixon has cut across this trend. He has continued and stepped up the aggressive war, broadened it to the whole of the Indochinese peninsula, through the "Vietnamization of the war" policy and the Nixon doctrine.

This time, too, all the efforts and schemes of the US administration have entailed very heavy losses and consequences in Viet Nam, Indochina, the United States and everywhere else in the world. It was in such circumstances that Minister Nguyen Thi Binh on July 1st, 1971 tabled the seven-point solution of the RSVN PRG at the Paris Conference.

Right at the moment it was made public, the seven-point solution had wide repercussions among public opinion around the world. It brought joy and enthusiasm, and won universal welcome for its justness, realism and opportuneness. Very seldom in a fierce and complicated confrontation like this war has a solution put forward by one side enjoyed such wide and deep response, even among political circles in the United States. Clearly the situation has matured in the unfolding of the war and the mind of the people for advancing to a solution aimed at ending the war and restoring peace on the basis of a clear distinction between the aggressor and the victim of aggression, the loser and the winner, between right and wrong, and this is the stern result of inexorable logic and the implacable law of war as outlined above.

The general consensus of the American people of all strata and of political circles in the United States is unanimous in urging an end to the war of aggression in Indochina. A broad, vigorous and resolute struggle is taking place throughout the United States for the recognition by the Nixon administration of the seven-point solution as a correct basis and good opportunity for stopping the war of aggression and for averting a disaster for the United States.

(Under the title "Let's Get Out" the US magazine *Newsweek* on July 5, 1971 carried an article on the ideological change in Colonel David Hackworth. This "most decorated US officer of the Indochinese war" has come to this conclusion: "Hey baby, ve have erred. Let's get out.")

Everywhere in South Viet Nam, our countrymen have welcomed the seven-point solution with visible enthusiasm, and this is a smart blow at the puppets, their army and administration. Saigon papers have carried articles welcoming the seven points as a good basis for settling the Viet Nam issue, ending the war, restoring peace and achieving national concord. A delegation of American students and professors (Professor George Wald, Nobel Prize winner) and a delegation of South Vietnamese students have issued a joint statement welcoming the seven points as the "best hope" for a settlement of the Viet Nam questions.

What was, in face of this situation, the US administration's response to the seven-point stand?

Notwithstanding the flop of the plan for "Vietnamization" of the war in South Viet Nam and the opposition of the progressive people in the United States and world public opinion, the American ruling circle have so far given no positive response to the seven-point solution.

They refuse to declare in a clear-cut way to withdraw all US troops and to seize the opportunity for repatriating captured American militarymen in the spirit of Point One. They refuse to recognize

the genuine right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese people following the fair and reasonable order and procedures proposed in Point Two.

On the contrary, they still want to maintain US troops in South Viet Nam and keep the present Saigon puppet administration as a tool for the "Vietnamization of the var" policy. A clear manifestation of these dark designs is the "election" farce being staged in Saigon. This utterly odious and cynical waggery proves that the statements of the US authorities in Washington as well as in Saigon on the so-called "neutral attitude" of the US in the election and the "right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese people" are but shameless deception. On the other hand, this buffoonery also shows that the American "bosses" themselves are at a loss to string the puppets of their own creation. All this reflects the victorious posture of the struggle against US aggression and for national salvation in South Viet Nam, the growth of the struggle of the people in the areas still controlled by the enemy, and the unavoidable failure of the "Vietnamization of the war" plan of the US imperialist aggressors.

It is clear that President R. Nixon does not want to talk seriously to settle the Viet Nam question on the basis of the seven points, although he has no legitimate reason to reject it. It is clear that the ruling circles in the White House and the Pentagon are bent on continuing their war of aggression, their "Vietnamization of the war" program and the Nixon doctrine in Indochina. They are clinging to their neo-colonialist dream in South Viet Nam and to their scheme of perpetuating the division of Viet Nam.

IN face of this obdurate and crazy attitude of the US aggressors, the entire Vietnamese nation, our countrymen and combatants in South Viet Nam, upholding the banner of unity and struggle and the determination to fight and win, are resolved to defeat completely the "Vietnamization of the war" plan of the US imperialists and carry to the letter the sacred appeal of President Ho Chi Minh: "Let's fight so the Yanks quit, and the puppets topple."

At this juncture, more than ever our just cause, our strength and our victorious posture are encouraging us, stimulating us and creating favourable conditions for us to march forward while our enemy are meeting with piling difficulties. The American and world press has made quite extensive exposure, analysis and comment on how great is the danger the United States is facing in all spheres, political, military, economic, financial, monetary, international relations... on account of the consequences of the war in Viet Nam and Indochina. Since July, this situation has aggravated dramatically, particularly in the economic, financial and monetary fields. In sum, the United States is going through a very grave and allround crisis, the origins of which are linked in one way or another, to its war of aggression, its unjust, criminal war in Indochina.

As for the stooges in South Viet Nam, they are obviously tumbling downhill especially since the beginning of this year after their defeat on Highway 9 and Southern Laos, at the South Viet Nam-Cambodia border, on the High Plateaux, in Tri Thien area and other places. In all fields, everywhere, they are confronting an ever more powerful struggle at a time when their internal situation is an inextricable chaos. More than ever, the balance of force is rapidly tipping in our favour and to the disadvantage of the enemy. Of course the enemy may cause to us new difficulties, but we will surely overcome them to advance steadily on our way toward the high peak of success. Meanwhile, difficulties for the enemy, in the United States and in Saigon, are piling and multiplying, and however the enemy may squirm and whatever manoeuvres they may resort to these difficulties will in the end drive them down into the abyss. This is an ineluctable irreversible trend.

In such a situation, our countrymen and combatants in the South, who have fought relentlessly for a quarter century, who have accumulated a wealth of experience in armed and political struggle in all circumstances and on all battlefields of the South, those staunch, indomitable, courageous and intelligent men and women full of creativity, who have been tempered and have grown continually in the flame of the most protracted and extraordinary people's war in history, have broken one after the other all military and political plans of the enemy, have defeated so many "pacification" programs of theirs, from the time of Staley-Taylor up to the present days. No doubt, our people and combatants in the South are sure to defeat completely the "Vietnamization of the war" trick, defeat the armed forces of the United States and its stooges, topple the puppet regime and smash their current "pacification" scheme. To reach these goals, we are waging a very urgent fight in the South of our country from south of the demarcation line to Cape Ca Mau, a fight which has drawn broad masses of the people with the ever more active participation of many persons in the puppet army and administration and with the sympathy and support of many US troops. That is a fight on all fronts aimed at destroying and weakening the enemy forces, strengthening and developing ours, consolidating and expanding the liberated zone, consolidating and broadening the right of our people to be master of their destiny in all places and under various forms.

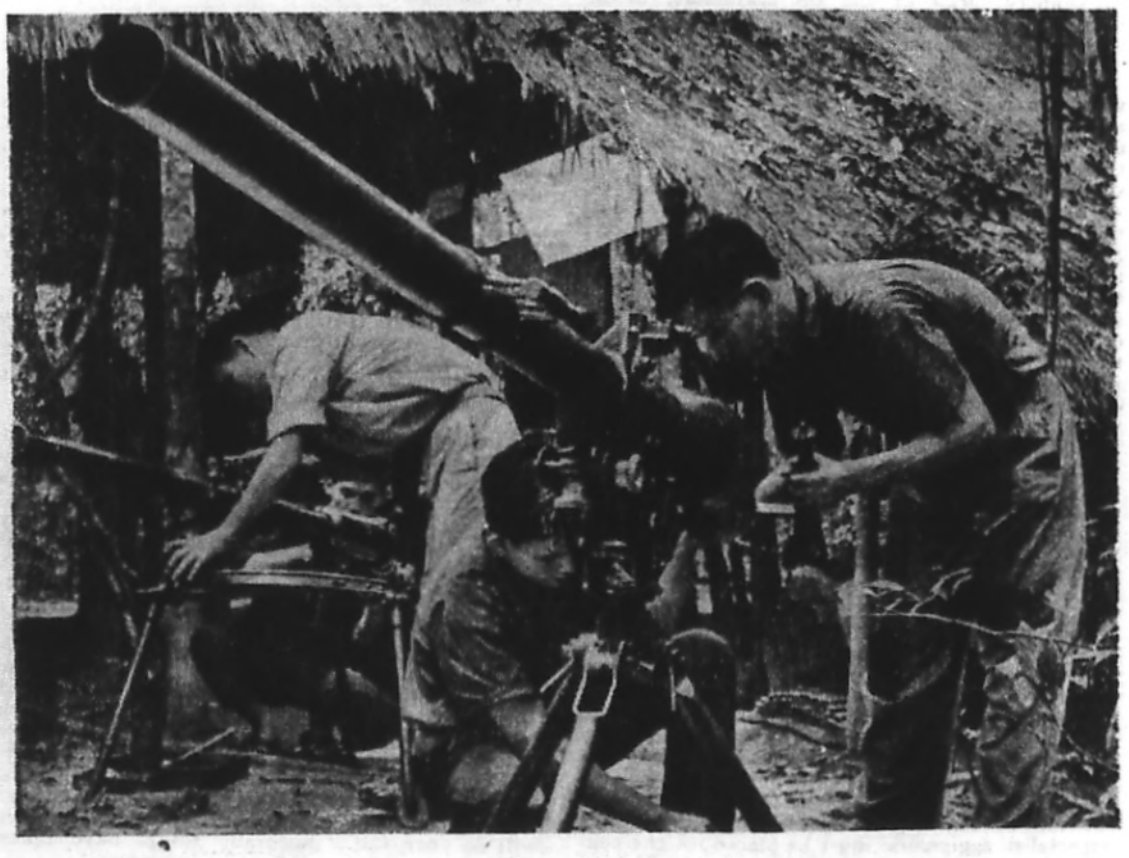
A very new and very inspiring thing with regard to the South of our country is that even now that the US and puppets remain there, everyone has seen that they have already lost the game, and that their days are numbered. More remarkable still, the enemy themselves are believing so. The press in Saigon, in the United States and many other places have spoken quite a lot about what is taking place among American troops and among the puppet army and administration in South Viet Nam.

Meantime, patriotic and anti-US, anti-puppet forces are swinging into action in the cities and towns, even in Saigon, Da Nang, Hue, Can Tho, etc. There, broad sections of the working people, youth, students and women with different political tendencies and religious beliefs and of different nationalities are participating in a powerful struggle, demanding democracy and better livelihood, demanding peace, independence and neutrality, demanding that the US administration accept the seven points to stop the war and restore peace, and demanding the immediate pullout of all US troops and the overthrow of the Nguyen Van Thieu fascist clique, vile henchmen of the US aggressors. The indignation shown by everybody at the current "election" farce is a propitious opportunity to spread the struggle to all enemy-occupied areas in South Viet Nam. This movement reflects the victories and growth of our people's fight against US aggression, for national salvation, in many years past. It symbolizes the awakening of the national spirit in face of the unpardonable crimes of the aggressors and their running dogs. It marks an important progress of the struggle in the cities and towns, testifies to the great influence and prestige of the National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam. On all battlefields of South Viet Nam, even in the military bases and political centres of the enemy, before the enemy gun muzzles, millions of people have risen up to fight with the national pride of "rather die than be enslaved." Such a nation shall win!

A fundamental advantage of strategic significance of the Vietnamese people's fight against US aggression, for national salvation is the militant solidarity binding them to the two fraternal peoples on the Indochinese peninsula. This is the militant solidarity of fighters on the same front against a cruel and crafty enemy, for their sacred interests, the freedom and independence of the three peoples. This militant solidarity has brought to our three peoples tremendous victories on the common battlefield, especially in South-East and South-West Cambodia bordering on South Viet Nam, in Southern Laos, at Khe Sanh on Highway 9. Thanks to it, each of our three peoples has won repeated victories of paramount importance in fighting against the US aggressors and their mercenaries, in building their armed forces and political forces, in expanding and consolidating the liberated zones, thus opening up prospects for complete triumph.

Bound by this militant solidarity, the peoples of our three fraternal countries have better understood each other, given mutual support and assistance, closely cooperated with one another and stayed together through thick and thin in the spirit of "sharing each grain of salt between three" and of being true to noble internationalism, and will remain loyal to one another now as in the past and the future.

This common fight is opening bright vistas for relations that will unite for ever the three peoples of Indochina throughout their revolutionary cause, in the fight to defeat the US aggressors and their henchmen, and in building step by step a new life for each people according to their own traditions and aspiration and to the principle of independence and sovereignty of each country as clearly stated in the Joint Declaration of the Indochinese Peoples' Summit Conference in April 1970. For their part, we Vietnamese people are deeply conscious that our fight against US aggression, for national salvation, forms an integral part of the common struggle of the three peoples of Indochina and is closely related to the fight of the peoples of Laos and Cambodia. From the bottom of our hearts, we express our deep and sincere gratitude to our two fraternal and neighbouring peoples who have always reserved for us their great and precious support and assistance. From the bottom of our hearts, we express our profound feelings, our respect and admiration for and boundless confidence in our brothers fighting by our side in the same combat-trench. The peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia pledge to unite and fight to make the land of each people and our three countries in Indochina for ever the land of freedom and independence, peace and friendship, happiness and prosperity!



Ready to defeat the U.S. aggressors